

E 449  
.T66











# AN ORATION.

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

## FEW AND PHI GAMMA SOCIETIES,

OF EMORY COLLEGE,

AT OXFORD, GA., JULY, 1853,

BY HON. ROBERT <sup>4</sup>✓  
TOOMBS.

Slavery in the United States ; its consistency with Republican Institutions, and  
its effect upon the Slave and Society.

AUGUSTA, GEORGIA.

STEAM POWER PRESS OF CHRONICLE & SENTINEL.

1853.

449  
11  
200



## CORRESPONDENCE.

FEW HALL, JULY 20, 1853.

Hon. ROBERT TOOMBS :

*Dear Sir:*—As the organ of the Few Society of Emory College, we are authorised to tender you the thanks of that body for the very able address delivered to-day, before the two literary societies of this Institution. And believing it to be a clear and convicting vindication of the institution of slavery, and calculated to throw much light upon the same, would most respectfully solicit a copy for publication.

Very Respectfully,

W. H. HILL,  
H. R. FELDER, } *Cor. Committee.*  
W. W. KEATON, }

---

OXFORD, GA., JULY 20, 1853.

GENTLEMEN:

Your note of to-day asking a copy of my address for publication is received. I will furnish you with one at an early day. For the very flattering terms in which you have been pleased to communicate the wishes of the Few Society, you will please accept my thanks.

I am very respectfully, your obedient Servant,

R. TOOMBS.

To Messrs. W. H. HILL, H. R. FELDER, W. W. KEATON, Committee.



## SLAVERY IN THE UNITED STATES;

*Its consistency with Republican Institutions, and  
its effect upon the Slave and Society.*

PUBLIC opinion has always been a recognised element in directing the affairs of the world, and many causes have combined in our day to increase its strength and power. The more general diffusion of education, the increased facilities of personal intercourse, the rapidity with which ideas and intelligence may be transmitted, and a more general agreement among mankind, as to the standard by which man and all of his acts ought to be tried, have made this power formidable beyond all former precedent in the world's history. Its jurisdiction seems to be universal, circumscribed by no limits, bounded by no recognised landmarks, it invades the sanctuaries of the Most High and questions his oracles—enters the palaces of kings and rulers, and the homes of the people, and summons all to answer at its bar. Being but the judgment of fallible man, it can claim no exemption from his errors, his frailties, his ignorance, or passions, yet being mischievous even in its errors, it is not wise or safe to disregard it.

Before this tribunal our social and political system is arraigned, and we are summoned to answer. It is my purpose, to-day, to respond to the summons. I consider the occasion not inappropriate. The investigative discussion and decision of social questions are no longer confined to

legislative halls and political assemblies of the people. The secluded halls of science already resound with the notes of controversy on the subject.

Professors of some of the most ancient and eminent literary institutions in the Northern States, have recently entered this arena against us, and their theological seminaries are animating the zeal, if not increasing the knowledge of the combatants. One of the professors of the theological college of New England is now traversing old England, traducing his countrymen and her institutions, and is appropriately remunerated in the pence and plaudits of her aristocracy. The British reviews and periodical literature have entered with zeal into the contest. The Muses have abandoned Arcadian groves and Elysian fields, and have taken up their abode in waving cane and blooming cotton fields. Romance revels in this literary El Dorado, and transmutes unreal woes into substantial coin.

That the British government should second these assaults both at home and abroad, excites no surprise in those who have marked her policy or studied her history. She joins in this crusade under the cry of Religion, Humanity and Liberty, while her whole history proves that she has never, in her public policy, had the slightest regard for either. Her career, from William the Norman to this hour, has been but a continual warfare against the liberties and rights of the whole human race. Every continent of the earth, and every isle of the sea has been the theatre of her violence, inhumanity and injustice ; no race, not even her own, has escaped her terrible energy in crime. As late as the seventeenth century, she sold Englishmen as well as Africans in slavery to her own colonies. She rescued victims from Jeffreys and the bloody assizes to make merchandise of them in the new world. Her justice and humanity have been aptly illustrated in her conquest and government of Ireland—her regard for the rights and liberties of other nations, by her conquest and plunder of India—her public

morality, by her war with China, which she waged without a decent pretext to arrest an attempt at a social reform, and to make the Celestials buy of her poison and calico. To-day she is waging war, both in Africa and in India, to subject new millions to her despotism, and to supply new victims to her avarice. At this moment she avows an alliance with the Emperor of the French to uphold the crescent against the cross—Mahomedanism against Christianity in Constantinople. The Emperor of Russia demands securities for Christianity in the Ottoman Empire; the Turk refuses them, and Protestant England and Catholic France announce their readiness to back the refusal with war. In Turkey both domestic slavery and political despotism exist in their most rigid forms, and her slave markets are daily crowded with the fairest daughters of the Caucasian race. Yet this defender of christianity, and champion of humanity and liberty, is ready to maintain the Koran against the Bible, and the slavery of both white and black races in Turkey, to preserve the balance of power in Europe, and her trade with the followers of Mahomed. But her mercenary hypocrisy no longer deceives mankind.

Commercial and political jealousy is the fountain from which flows her crocodile tears in behalf of the African slave.. The productions of our slave labor have driven the like productions of her free blacks out of the markets of the world, and have built up for us a commercial marine, which threatens her supremacy on the seas. Our manufacturers are meeting and competing with hers in every market, and the liberty and prosperity of our people have awakened a feeling of discontent in her toiling and suffering millions, and when their great struggle for the rights of humanity shall come, her government and her aristocracy well know upon which side will be the sympathies, and perchance the power of America. Therefore she labors not for liberty, humanity or justice; she struggles for neither the happiness of the master, nor the rights of the slave, but for the ruin of

both. But the time and circumstances of the assault are as striking as the character of our assailants. For nearly twenty years our domestic enemies have struggled by pen and speech to excite discontent among the white race, and insurrection among the black ; their efforts have shaken the national government to its deep foundation, and bursted the bonds of christian unity in our land. Yet the objects of their attacks—the slaveholding states—reposing in the confidence of their strength, have scarcely felt the shock. In glancing over the civilized world, the eye rests upon not a single spot where all classes of society are so well content with their social system, or have greater reason to be so, than in the slaveholding states of the American Union. Stability, progress, order, peace, content and prosperity, reign throughout our borders. Not a single soldier is to be found in our widely extended domain, to overawe or protect society. The desire for organic change nowhere manifests itself. These great social and political blessings are not the results of accident, but the results of a wise, just and humane republican system. It is my purpose to vindicate the wisdom, humanity, and justice of this system, to show that the position of the African race in it, is consistent with its principles, advantageous to that race and society.

African slavery existed in all the colonies at the commencement of the revolution. The paramount authority of the crown with or without the consent of the colonies, had introduced and legalised it ; it was inextricably interwoven with the very frame work of society, especially in the Southern States. The question was not presented to us whether it was just or beneficial to the African, or advantageous to us to tear him away by force or fraud from bondage in his own country, and place him in a like condition in ours. England and the christian world had long since settled that question for us. At the final overthrow of British authority in these states, our ancestors found seven hundred thousand of the African race among them in

bondage, concentrated, from the nature of our climate and production, chiefly in the present slaveholding states. It became their duty to establish governments over the country from which their valour had driven out British authority. They entered upon this great work, profoundly impressed with the truth, that that government was best which secured the greatest happiness possible to the whole society, and adopted constitutional Republics as the best mode to secure that great end of human society. They incorporated no Utopian theories in their system. Starting from the point that each state was sovereign, and embodied the collective will and power of its whole people, they affirmed its right and duty to define and fix, as well as protect and defend the rights of each individual member of the state, and to hold all individual rights as subordinate to the great interests of the whole society. This last proposition is the corner stone of Republican government, which must be stricken out before the legal status of the African race among us can be shown to be inconsistent with its principles. The question with the builders up of our system of government, was not what rights man might have in a state of nature, but what rights he ought to have in a state of society ; they dealt with rights as things of compact and not of birthright, in the concrete and not in the abstract. A very slight examination of our state constitutions, will show how little they regarded vague notions of abstract liberty or natural equality in fixing the rights of the white race, as well as the black. The elective franchise, the cardinal feature of our system, was granted, withheld, or limited, according to their ideas of public policy. It was withheld by all of them from females, not because they were deemed less competent to exercise it than many to whom it was granted, but because it was adjudged that their own and the public happiness would be promoted by the exclusion.

All of them excluded minors because they were adjudged, as a class, incompetent to exercise it wisely. They all

excluded the African race, free as well as bond, because as a race they were considered unfit to be trusted with it. All of them excluded the Indian tribes from that right, or any other in the social compact. The constitutions of some of the states excluded from the right of suffrage all persons except the owners of the soil, and all of them, it is believed, originally imposed some condition or restraint upon its exercise, applicable to all persons. The same great principle is no less happily illustrated in the numerous restraints placed by both our state and national constitutions, upon the supposed abstract right of a mere numerical majority to govern society in all cases. Thus our institutions every where affirm the subordination of individual rights to the interest and safety of the whole society.

The slave holders acting upon these principles, finding the Africans already among them in slavery, unfit to be intrusted with political power, and incapable as freemen of either securing their own happiness, or promoting the public prosperity, recognised their condition as slaves, and subjected it to legal control. The justice and policy of this decision, have both been greatly questioned, and both must depend upon the soundness of the assumptions upon which it was based. I hold that they were sound and true, and that the African is unfit to be intrusted with political power, and incapable as a freeman of securing his own happiness or contributing to the public prosperity, and that whenever the two races co-exist, a state of slavery is best for him and for society. And under it, in our country, he is in a better condition than any he has ever attained in any other age and country, either in bondage or freedom. To prove this, I propose to trace the African rapidly from his earliest history to the present time. The monuments of that profoundly mysterious people, the Egyptians, carry him back to the morning of time—older than the pyramids—they furnish the evidence both of his national identity and his social degradation, before history began. We first behold him a



slave in foreign lands, we then find him a slave in his native land, and then after forty centuries have passed over him, we still find him a slave, and a slave of savage masters as incapable as himself of even attempting a single step in civilization. We find him then without government, or laws, or protection, without letters, or arts, or industry, without religion, or even the aspirations which would raise him to the rank of an idolater, and in his lowest type, his almost only mark of humanity is that he walks erect in the image of the Creator. Annihilate his race to-day in Africa, and in a score of years there would be no more trace of his existence than of the wild beasts of the forest. This has ever been his condition in the home which Providence assigned him.

In the eastern hemisphere he has been found in all ages scattered among the nations of every degree of civilization, yet always in a servile condition. Amid the convulsions of the world, nearly all people of the old world have, at some time, passed under the yoke, yet in none but the African do we find slavery his unvarying, normal condition.

Very soon after the discovery and settlement of America, the policy of the christian world bought large numbers of their people of their savage masters and countrymen, and imported them into the Western World. Here we are enabled to view them under different and far more favourable conditions. In Hayti, by the encouragement of the French government, after a long probation of slavery, they became free; and, led on by the valour and conduct of the mixed breeds, aided by overpowering numbers, they massacred the small number of whites who inhabited the Island, and succeeded to the undisputed sway of the finest island in the West Indies under the highest state of cultivation. Their condition in Hayti left nothing to be desired for the most favorable experiment of the capacity of the race for self-government and civilization. This experiment has now been tested for sixty years, and its results are before the world. A war of races began the moment the fear of foreign

invasion ceased, and resulted in the extermination of the greater number of the mulattoes who had rescued them from the dominion of the whites. Revolutions, tumults and disorders have been the ordinary pastimes of the emancipated blacks; production has almost ceased, and their stock of civilization acquired in slavery has become already exhausted, and they are now scarcely distinguishable from the tribes from which they were torn in their native land.

More recently the same experiment has been tried in Jamaica, under the auspices of England. The Island of Jamaica was one of the most beautiful, productive, and prosperous of the British colonial possessions. England, deceived by the theories of her speculative philanthropists into the opinion that free blacks would be more productive laborers than slaves, in 1838 proclaimed total emancipation of the black race in Jamaica. Her arms and her power have watched over and protected them; not only the interest but the absolute necessities of the white proprietors of the land compelled them to offer every inducement and stimulant to industry, yet the experiment stands before the world a confessed failure. Ruin has overwhelmed the proprietors; and the negro, true to his nationality, buries himself in filth, and sloth, and crime. In the United States, too, we have peculiar opportunities for studying the African race under different conditions. Here we find him in slavery; here we find him also a freeman in the slaveholding and in the non-slaveholding states. The best specimen of the free blacks to be found are in the Southern States, in the closest contact with slavery and subject to many of its restraints. Upon the theory of the abolitionists the most favorable condition in which you can view the free negro is in the non-slaveholding states of the Union; there we ought to expect to find him displaying all the capability of his race for improvement, in a temperate climate, among an active, industrious, and ingenious people, surrounded by sympathising friends, and mild, and just, and equal institutions, if he fails here, surely

it can be chargeable to nothing but himself. He has had seventy years to cleanse himself and his race from the leprosy of slavery, yet what is his condition to-day? He is lord of himself, but he finds it "a heritage of woe." After seventy years of probation among themselves, the Northern States, acting upon the same principles of self-protection which had marked our policy, declare him unfit to enjoy the rights and perform the duties of citizenship. Denied social equality by an irreversable law of nature, and political rights by municipal law, incapable of maintaining an unequal struggle with a superior race, the melancholy history of his career of freedom is here most usually found recorded in criminal courts, jails, poor houses, and penitentiaries. The authentic statistics of crime and poverty show an amount of misery and crime among the free blacks out of all proportion to their numbers, when compared to any class of the white race. This fact has had itself recognised in the most decisive manner throughout the Northern States. No town, or city, or state, encourages their emigration; many of them discourage it by political legislation; and some of the non-slaveholding States have absolutely prohibited their entry into their borders, under any circumstances whatever. If the Northern States which adopt this policy, deny the truth of the principles upon which our policy is built and maintained, they are guilty of a most cruel injury to an unhappy race. They do admit it, and expel them from their borders and drive them out as wanderers and outcasts. The result of this policy is every where apparent. The statistics of population supply the evidence of their condition. In the non-slaveholding states their annual increase, during the last ten years, has been but little over one per cent., even with the additions of fugitives from labor and emancipated slaves from the South, clearly showing that in this their most favored condition when left to themselves they are barely capable of maintaining their existence, and with the prospect of a denser population and greater competition in labor for

employment consequent thereon, they are in danger of becoming extinct. The Southern States, acting upon the same admitted fact, keep them in the condition in which we found them, protect them against themselves and compel them to contribute to their own and the public interests and welfare. That our system does promote the well-being of the African race subject to it, and the public interest I shall now proceed to show by facts which are open to all men and can be neither controverted or denied. We submit our slave institutions to the same tests by which we try the labor of other countries, and which are admitted to be sound by the common consent of mankind, and we say that under them we have not only elevated the African above his own race in any other country, but that his condition is superior to that of millions of laborers in England, who neglects her own to look after the condition of our operatives.

Our political system gives the slave great and valuable rights. His life is equally protected with that of his master, his person is secure from assault against all others except his master, and his power in this respect is placed under salutary restraints. He is entitled by law to ample food and clothing, and exempted from excessive labour, and when no longer capable of labour, in old age or disease, his comfortable maintainance is a legal charge upon his master. We know that these rights are, in the main, faithfully secured to him; but I rely not on the knowledge of ourselves, but appeal to public facts. These are furnished by our public statistics. They show that our slaves are larger consumers of animal food than any population in Europe, and that their natural increase is equal to that of any other people, which are universally admitted tests that their physical comforts are amply secured. In 1790 there were less than seven hundred thousand slaves in the United States; they now number three and a quarter millions. The same authority shows their increase within the last ten years to have been above twenty-eight per cent., or nearly three per cent. per annum,

an increase equal, allowing for the element of foreign emigration, to the white race, and nearly three times that of the free blacks of the North. These evidences of their personal rights, well-being, and physical comfort, are free from all cavil and admit of no escape. But these legal rights of the slave embrace but a small portion of the privileges actually enjoyed by him. The nature of the relation of master and slave begets kindnesses, imposes duties, (and secures their performance,) which exist in no other relation of capital and labor. Interest and humanity co-operate in harmony for the well-being of our labourer. A striking evidence of this fact, is found in our religious statistics. While religious instruction is not enjoined by law in all the states, the number of slaves who are in communion with the different churches, abundantly proves the universality of their enjoyment of religious privileges. And a learned clergyman in New York has recently shown, from the records of our evangelical churches, that a greater number of African slaves in the United States have enjoyed, and are enjoying, the consolations of religion than the combined efforts of all the christian churches have been able to redeem from the heathen world, since the introduction of slavery among us. Yet the immoralities of the slaves, and of those connected with slavery, are constant themes of abolition denunciation. They are lamentably great; but it remains to be shown that they are greater than with the laboring poor of England or any other country. And it is shown that our slaves are without the additional stimulant of want to drive them to crime; we have at least removed from them the excuse and temptation of hunger. Poor human nature here is at least spared the wretched fate of the utter prostration of its moral nature at the feet of its physical wants. Lord Ashley's report to the British Parliament shows that in the capitol of the British empire, perhaps within hearing of Stafford House and Exeter Hall, the gnawings of hunger, and the cries of famishing children for food, every

day whisper in the ears of starving fathers and mothers. yield or perish—sin or die.

It is objected that our slaves are debarred educational advantages. The objection is well taken, but is without great force ; their station in society makes education neither necessary nor useful, besides it comes with a bad grace from England—eight-tenths of whose population have been debarred them by causes stronger than law, and if they could by any means obtain them, it is difficult to show the advantages of education to English laborers, who are doomed to toil twelve hours a day for a money compensation inadequate to supply their lowest physical wants. We are reproached that the marriage relation is neither recognised nor protected by law. This reproach is not wholly unjust, this is an evil not yet remedied by law, but marriage is not inconsistent with the institution of slavery as it exists among us, and the objection, therefore, lies rather to an incident than to the essence of the system. But even in this we have deprived the slave of no pre-existing right. We found the race without any knowledge of, or regard for the institution of marriage, and we are reproached for not having, as yet, secured that and all other blessings of civilization. The separation of families is much relied on by the abolitionists in Europe and America. Some of the slaveholding states have already made partial provision against this evil, and all of them may do so ; but the objection is far more formidable in theory than practice, even without legislative interposition.

The tendency of slave labour is to aggregation—of free labour to dispersion. The accidents of life, the desire to better one's condition, and the pressure of want (the proud man's contumely and oppressor's wrong) produce infinitely a greater amount of separation in families of the white races than that which ever happened to the slave. This is true every where, even in the United States, where the general condition of the people is prosperous. But it is still more marked in Europe. The injustice and despotism

of England to Ireland has produced more separation of Irish families, and sundered more domestic ties within the last ten years, than slavery has effected since its introduction into the United States. The twenty millions of freemen in the United States are living witnesses to the dispersive injustice of the old world. And to-day England is purchasing coolies in India, and apprentices in Africa, to redeem her West India possessions from the folly of emancipation. What severities has she thrown around the family altars of these miserable savages. It is in vain to call this separation voluntary—if it were true, that fact mitigates none of its evils. But it is the result of a necessity as stern, inexorable and irresistible, as the physical force which brings the slave from Virginia to Georgia.

But the monster objection to our institution of slavery in the estimation of its opponents is, that wages are withheld from labor—the force of the objection is lost in its want of truth. An examination of the true theory of wages will expose its fallacy. Under the system of free labor, wages are paid in money, the representative of products, in ours in products themselves. If we pay, in the comforts of life, more than the free laborer's pecuniary wages will buy, then our laborer is paid higher wages than the free laborer. The Parliamentary Reports in England show that the wages of agricultural and unskilled labor in Great Britain not only fails to furnish the laborer with the comforts of the slave, but even with the necessaries of life, and no slave holder in Georgia could escape a conviction for cruelty to his slaves who exacted from them the same amount of labor, for the same compensation in the necessaries of life, which noblemen and gentlemen of England pay their free laborers. Under their system man has become less valuable and less cared for than their domestic animals; and noble Dukes will depopulate whole districts of men to supply their places with sheep, and then with intrepid audacity lecture and denounce American slaveholders.

The great conflict between labor and capital under free competition has ever been how the earnings of labor shall be divided between it and capital. In new and sparsely settled countries, where land is cheap, and food is easily produced, and education and intelligence approximate equality, labor can struggle successfully in this warfare with capital. But this is an exceptional and temporary condition of society. In the old world this state of things has long since passed away, and the conflict with the lower grades of labor has long since ceased. There the compensation of unskilled labor, which first succumbs to capital, is reduced to a point scarcely adequate to the continuance of the race. Among them the rate of increase is barely one per cent., and even at that rate population is considered a curse; and in the older non-slaveholding states of this Union this great contest is becoming more and more unequal, and capital is fast becoming the master of labor, with all the benefits without the responsibility of the relation. In this division of the earnings of labor between it and capital the southern slave has a marked advantage over English labor, and is often equal with the free laborer of the North. Here again we are furnished with authentic data from which to reason. Our public statistics show that on cotton estates of the South, which is the chief branch of our agricultural industry, that one half of the arable lands are annually put under food crops. This half is wholly consumed, as a general rule, on the farm by the laborers and animals; out of the other half must be paid all the necessary expenses of production, often including additional supplies of food beyond the produce of the land, which usually equals one-third of the residue, leaving but one-third for nett rent. The average rent of land in the New England States is equal to one-third of the gross produce, and it frequently amounts to one-half of it, (and in England it is even greater,) the tenant from his portion paying all expenses of production and support of himself and family. Then it is apparent that the laborer of the



South receives always as much and frequently a greater portion of the produce of the land than the laborer in New or Old England. Besides, here the portion due the slave is a charge upon the whole product of capital and upon the capital itself. It is neither dependant upon seasons nor subject to accidents, and survives his own capacity for labor and even the ruin of his master. The general happiness, cheerfulness, and contentment of the slaves, compare favorably with that of laborers in any other age or country. They require no standing armies to enforce their obedience, while the evidences of discontent, and the appliance of force to repress it, are every where visible among the toiling millions of the earth. Even in the northern states of this Union, strikes and mobs, and labor unions, and combinations against employers, attest at once the misery and discontent of labor among them. The English keep a hundred thousand soldiers, a large navy, and an innumerable police to secure obedience to their social institutions, and physical force is the sole guarantee of her social order, the only cement of her gigantic empire.

I have briefly traced the condition of the African race through all ages and all countries, and described it fairly and truly under American slavery, and I think that both propositions fully established that here his position is superior to that of his race in any other land, and also to large masses of the Caucasian race, enjoying nominal freedom in the most favored nations of Christendom. The picture is not without shade as well as light. Evils and imperfections cling to man and all of his institutions, this is not exempt from them. That the condition of the slave offers great opportunities for abuse is true, that these opportunities are frequently used to violate justice and humanity, is also true. But our laws restrain these abuses and punish these crimes, in this, as well as in all the other relations of life. They who assume it as a fundamental principle in the constitution of man, that abuse is the unvarying concomitant of

power and crime of opportunity, subvert the foundations of all private morals and of every social system. No where does this principle find a nobler refutation than in the treatment of the African race by southern slaveholders. And we may, with hope and confidence, safely leave to them the removal of the existing abuses under which it now labours and such further ameliorations of its condition as may be demanded by justice and humanity. His condition is not permanent among us and we may find his exodus in the unvarying laws of population. Under the conditions of labor in England, and the continent of Europe, slavery could not exist here or anywhere else. The moment wages descend to a point barely sufficient to support the laborer and his family, capital cannot afford to own labor, and slavery instantly ceases. Slavery ceased in England in obedience to this law, and not from any regard to liberty or humanity. The increase of population will produce the same result in this country, and American slavery, like that of England, will find its euthanasia in the general prostration of all labor.

The next aspect in which I propose to view this question, is its effects upon the interests of the slaveholding states themselves. The great argument by which slavery was formerly assailed was that it was a dear, unprofitable and unproductive labor ; it was held that the slave himself would be a more productive member of society as a freeman than in bondage. The results of emancipation in the British and French West India Islands has not only disproven but annihilated this theory. And an inquiry into the wealth and production of our slaveholding states will demonstrate that slave labor can be more economically and productively applied, at least to agriculture, than any other. The same truth will be made manifest by a comparison of the products of Cuba and Brazil, not only with these Islands and Hayti, but with those of the free races occupying the same latitudes and engaged in the same, or similar productions, in any part of the world. The slaveholding states with about one-half

of the white population, and three millions of slaves, furnish four-fifths of the whole exports of the Republic containing twenty-three millions of inhabitants, and their entire products, including every branch of industry exceed those of the more populous northern states. And a distinguished statesman of our own state has recently conclusively shown, by an accurate examination of our statistics, that Georgia with less than half of the population, about equals, in her productions of industry, the State of Ohio, one of the most prosperous of the northern states. The difference in realised wealth in proportion to population is not less remarkable and equally favorable to the slaveholding states.

I may safely leave the question of the fitness of slave labor for the production of wealth, to the authentic facts disclosed in the late census. But the fact needs some explanation, as it seems to be a profound mystery to the opponents of slavery, how the system is capable at the same time of increasing the comforts of the slave, the profits of the master, and do no violence to humanity. Yet its solution rests upon the soundest principles of political economy. Here the labour of the country is united with and protected by its capital, directed by the educated and intelligent, secured against its own weakness, waste and folly, associated in such form, as to give the greatest efficiency in production, and the least cost of maintenance. Each individual laborer of the North is the victim not only of his folly and extravagance, but of his ignorance, misfortunes and necessities. His isolation enlarges his expenses without increasing his comforts, his want of capital increases the price of everything he buys, disables him from supplying his wants at favorable times, or on advantageous terms, and throws him in the hands of retailers and extortioners. But labor united with capital, directed by skill, forecast and intelligence, while it is capable of its highest production, is freed from these evils, leaves a margin both for increased comforts to the laborer and additional profits to capital. This is the explanation of the seeming paradox.

The opponents of slavery, true to their monomania that it is the sum of all evils and crimes, in spite of all history, sacred and profane, ancient or modern, all facts and all truth, insist that its effect on the commonwealth is to enervate it, demoralise it, and render it incapable of advancement and a high civilization, and upon the citizen to debase him morally, physically and intellectually. Such is neither the truth of history, sacred or profane, nor the experience of our own past or present. To the Hebrew race were committed the oracles of the Most High, slaveholding priests administered at his altar, and slaveholding patriarchs and prophets received his revelations, taught them to their own, and transmitted them to all generations of men. Letters, and arts, and science, and power, and wealth, and dominion, first arose from the dark night of the past in slaveholding Egypt. The highest forms of ancient civilization, and the noblest development of the individual man, are to be found in the ancient commonwealths of Greece and Rome. In Greece, liberty, in the midst of domestic slavery, first erected legal barriers against political despotism, and maintained them with a heroism which has excited the admiration of all subsequent ages.

In great achievements in arms, in science and arts, she stands pre-eminent among the nations of the earth. Statesmen study her institutions, and learn lessons of political wisdom, and the highest intellects of every age have delighted in her literature, notwithstanding the boasted advancement of our age. Homer, Demosthenes, Aristotle, Thucydides, and Xenophon, are yet text books in our schools and colleges; and in eloquence, in rhetoric, in poetry, in painting, in sculpture and architecture, you must still go and search amid the wreck and ruins of her genius for "the pride of every model and the perfection of every master."

Public liberty and domestic slavery were cradled together and marked the civil polity of the commonwealth of ancient Rome. Her hardy sons, distinguished for personal prowess,

for frugality and simplicity of manners, for public and private virtue, and the intensity of their patriotism, carried her victorious eagles in triumph over the then known world. She overran Greece, appropriated her civilization, studied her literature, and rivalled her glory in letters. She carried her civilization with her conquests over western Europe, and time has not yet been able to efface the footprints of her language, her literature, or her liberty ; and her jurisprudence, surviving her nationality, has incorporated itself in that of all the civilized nations of Europe and America. The language and literature of both, stamped with immortality, passes on to mingle itself in the thought and speech of all lands and all countries. But it is needless to multiply illustrations. That domestic slavery neither enfeebles or deteriorates our race, that it is not inconsistent with the highest advancement of man or society, is the lesson taught by all ancient and confirmed by all modern history.

Its effects in strengthening rather than weakening the attachment of the dominant race to liberty was clearly perceived and eloquently expressed in the British Parliament by Edmund Burke, one of the most accomplished and philosophical statesmen England ever produced. Mr. Burke, in his speech on conciliation with America, uses the following language : "where this is the case, those who are free, are by far the most proud and jealous of their freedom. . . . I can not alter the nature of man. The fact is so, and these people of the southern colonies are much more strongly, and with a higher and more stubborn spirit, attached to liberty than those to the northward. Such were all the ancient commonwealths, such were our Gothic ancestors, and such in our day were the Poles ; and such will be all masters of slaves who are not slaves themselves. In such a people the haughtiness of denunciation combines itself with the spirit of freedom, fortifies it, and renders it invincible."

And it is worthy of remark that these opinions are quoted, approved, and inserted in his work on the Constitution of

the United States by that eminent statesman and profound jurist, the late Joseph Story.

Mr. Burke's opinion has been amply sustained by the history of our Republic. Our separation from England was declared in the Southern States. The author of the declaration of our Independence, and the great leader of our armies, the foremost man of all the earth, were born and reared under Southern Institutions. In that great conflict, the posts of danger and duty were no where shunned by the sons of the South, their eloquence every where aroused and animated the spirit of liberty among their countrymen, and their valour in its defence was illustrated in every battle field. British aggression upon the citizens and commerce of the Northern States caused the war of 1812, yet the Southern States were neither behind them in its declaration or maintenance, her statesmen vindicated its policy in council and her soldiers maintained it in the field, and the crowning glory of that war is indelibly associated with the conduct and courage of her sons. The two great leaders of the Mexican war were her sons, and her regiments were not unworthy competitors with their northern comrades for the honors of that conflict. The civil history of the country furnishes us little evidence of her inferiority, and the reproach has been of a different character. The genius and intellectual power of statesmen are impressed upon her foreign and domestic policy and are written on every page of her history. In none of the pursuits of life are to be found the evidences of her moral, physical or intellectual inferiority.

The history of our own state is an illustrious example of what progress society may make under our institutions. We came out of the revolution with less than seventy thousand inhabitants, nearly one half of whom were slaves. Sparsely scattered along the coast, and upon the margin of Savannah River, almost surrounded by the most powerful and warlike Indian tribes on the continent, who occupied

four-fifths of our territory, our fields were laid waste, and our hearths made desolate by the combined atrocities of the British and Indians. We were without organized government, without wealth, without the means of education, of religious instruction, with nothing but strong arms and stout hearts, and this fair domain, which valour had wrested from the iron grasp of tyranny. Some of these sixty thousand inhabitants now live to behold a great commonwealth containing a million of inhabitants, powerful, rich, educated, moral and refined, prosperous and happy, with a republican government adequate to the protection of public liberty and private rights, which is cheerfully obeyed, supported, and upheld by all classes of society. With a noble system of internal improvements, penetrating almost every neighborhood, stimulating and rewarding the industry of her people, with moral and intellectual improvement, keeping pace with physical; with churches, school-houses, and colleges daily multiplying in the land, bringing religious instruction and education to the homes of the people throughout our borders. And there is a marked feature in all this progress and improvement of society, which illustrates the character of our population. They have been effected, not by the government, but by the individual efforts of an enlightened, moral, energetic and religious people. All of our colleges (except the State University) have been erected and endowed by their voluntary contributions. This proud edifice in which I address you to-day is a monument to their public spirit, their wisdom and munificence. By the same means, we have enlarged the sphere and elevated the standard of female education to a point not excelled, if equalled, in any other country. The religious teachers of our people, a body of clergymen alike distinguished for piety, learning, and true eloquence, are without legal provision for their support, but are maintained by the voluntary aid of those whom they so well serve. Duty and conscience are our only tithe-proctors, yet the gospel is preached throughout our borders

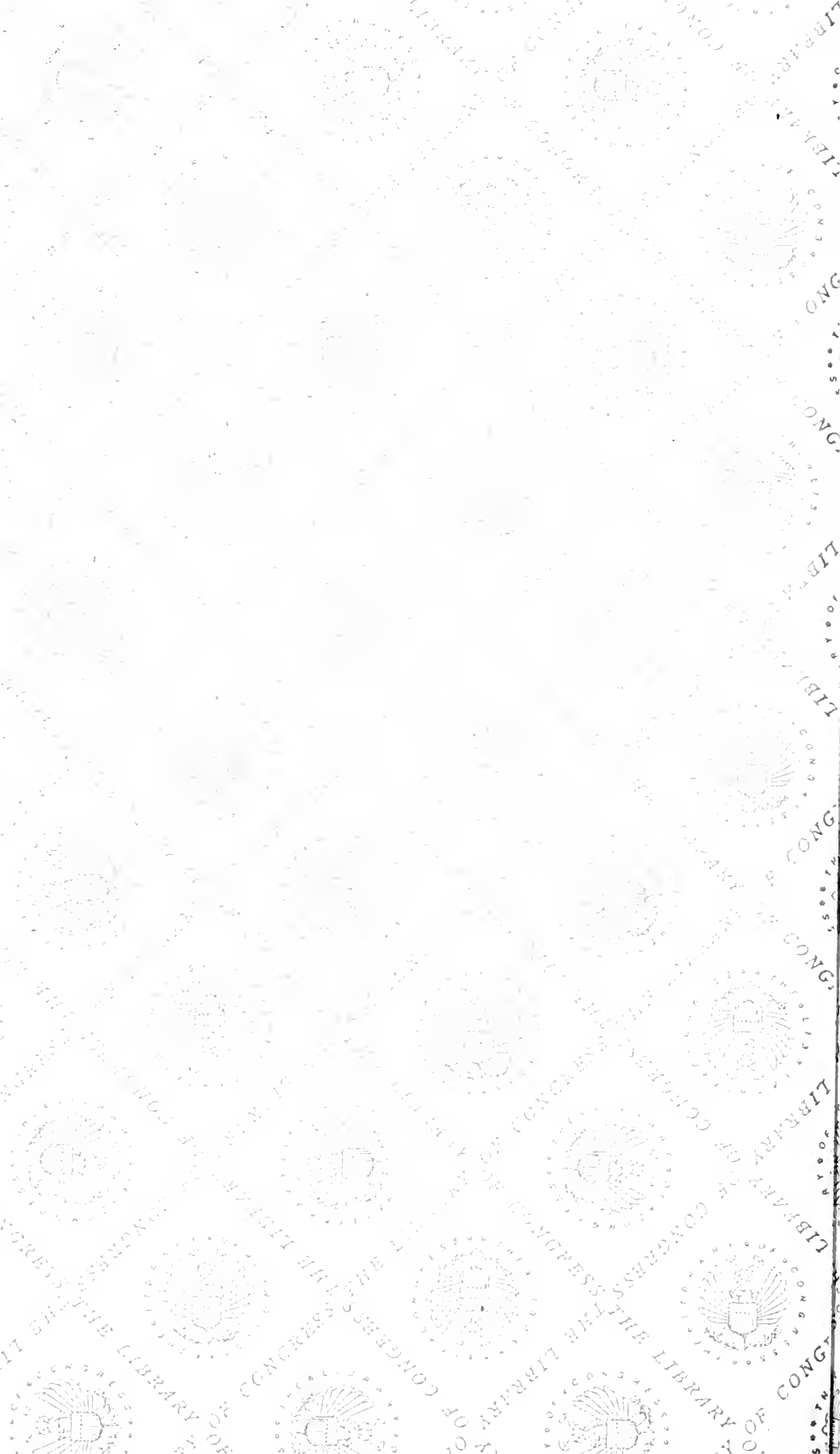
to rich and poor, bond and free, worshipping around the same altars with a power and purity of which the fruits are the best witnesses. Such is our social system and such our condition under it. Its political wisdom is vindicated in its effects on society, its morality by the practices of the Patriarchs and the teachings of the Apostles; we submit it to the judgment of the civilized world with the firm conviction that the adoption of no other system under our circumstances would have exhibited the individual man (bond or free) in a higher development, or society in a happier civilization.







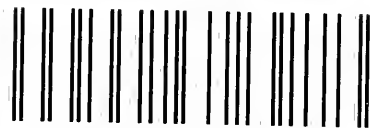




DOBBES BROS.  
LIBRARY BINDING

ST. AUGUSTINE  
FLA.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 011 932 605 9